



United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL
Washington, D.C. 20240

APR 09 2007

To: Bureau Directors and Office Heads

From: Stephen A. Hardgrove *Stephen A. Hardgrove*
Assistant Inspector General for Investigations

Subject: New Procedures

Ref.: OIG Investigative Referrals to Bureaus

The Office of Inspector General receives complaints from a variety of sources and routinely refers many issues to the Department's, Bureaus and Offices for inquiry, investigation, appropriate action and response. Depending upon the nature of the matter, we frequently require a response back to our office summarizing the investigation or review what the bureau/office has conducted and what actions, if any, has been taken to address the issue. In addition to complaints, the OIG refers completed reports of investigations conducted by our office back to bureaus for consideration of potential administrative actions.

In the past, OIG referrals required a response within 90 days from the date of the referral. We have routinely granted additional 60 or 90 days extensions to bureaus through a variety of informal means. Unfortunately, many of the matters that have been referred have not received the expected level of responsiveness by the bureaus. Responses are frequently not provided to the OIG in a timely manner or sometimes, not provided at all. In addition, in some instances, bureaus have not conducted an adequate review or addressed all of the issues raised. My office has often waited for the referrals to become delinquent before any contact is initiated, and then learn that the referral has been unassigned, misplaced or simply not acted upon.

The OIG, Office of Investigations has implemented new procedures to address these concerns including a formal process to approve requests for extensions. The Office of Investigations will also conduct a thorough review and evaluation of responses received from the bureaus to ensure that an appropriate review has been conducted. We will also attempt to limit the number of complaints referred to the bureaus that require an investigation/inquiry and response.

All matters referred by the OIG to the bureaus will be directed to the designated bureau contact person for tracking and action. For matters involving law enforcement personnel, referrals will also be directed to the appropriate entity's internal affairs component. In instances where the matter is sensitive or involves senior management, the referral will be made to the bureau/office

director. The initial due dates for referrals will continue to be 90 days and will be monitored closely.

2. Requests for extensions will no longer be automatically approved. Deputy Assistant Inspectors General (DAIG) John Dupuy and Scott Culver have both been authorized to approve requests for extensions when warranted. Approval of extension requests will be based upon the totality of the circumstances and will take into consideration the complexity of the matter, investigative progress that has been made and the reason for any delays. Requests for extensions should be directed to DAIG John Dupuy at (202) 208-5351 or DAIG Scott Culver at (703) 487-5431.
3. After our initial referral, we will also contact the designated POC for the bureau to confirm that the complaint has been received and to determine who has been assigned for the timely completion of the review and response. Additionally, we will make status calls to bureaus during the 90 day period to monitor progress before a referral actually becomes overdue. We are hopeful that this will reduce the number of complaints that become misplaced or lost in the system.
4. Our office will no longer maintain an open case file indefinitely for matters that remain delinquent. We have created a new case status designation "Bureau Non-Responsive" for referrals that are delinquent and remain unresolved. If it becomes necessary for us to close our files with a non-responsive designation, we will notify the bureau director in writing of that determination. We also intend to report non-responsive referrals to the Office of Secretary as well as to Congress in our semi-annual reports.
5. We continue to require proposing/deciding officials to complete an Accountability Form that accompanies all referrals. This form formally documents the action taken by the bureau/office and who the proposing and deciding officials are. We will also begin to specify the employees whose conduct/actions should be commented on when using the Accountability Form.

We appreciate the bureaus' support and commitment to work with us to improve the referral process, while we also strive to enhance the Department's programs and operations. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (202) 208-5492.

cc: Bureau OIG Liaison